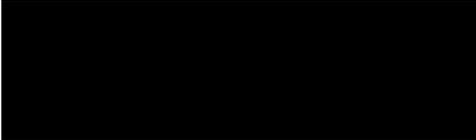




U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

MMI



FILE:



Office: VERMONT SERVICE CENTER

Date:

10/23/2004

IN RE:

Applicant:



APPLICATION:

Application for Temporary Protected Status under Section 244 of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1254

ON BEHALF OF APPLICANT: SELF-REPRESENTED

INSTRUCTIONS:

This is the decision of the Administrative Appeals Office in your case. All documents have been returned to the office that originally decided your case. Any further inquiry must be made to that office.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Robert P. Wiemann".

for

Robert P. Wiemann, Director
Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The application was denied by the Director, Vermont Service Center, and is now before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) on appeal. The appeal will be dismissed.

The applicant is a native and citizen of El Salvador who is seeking Temporary Protected Status (TPS) under section 244 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1254.

The director denied the application because the applicant failed to establish his continuous physical presence in the United States since March 9, 2001.

On appeal, the applicant provides a brief statement and additional documentation.

Section 244(c) of the Act, and the related regulations in 8 C.F.R. § 244.2, provide that an applicant who is a national of a foreign state designated by the Attorney General is eligible for temporary protected status only if such alien establishes that he or she:

- (a) Is a national, as defined in section 101(a)(21) of the Act, of a foreign state designated under section 244(b) of the Act;
- (b) Has been continuously physically present in the United States since the effective date of the most recent designation of that foreign state;
- (c) Has continuously resided in the United States since such date as the Attorney General may designate;
- (d) Is admissible as an immigrant except as provided under section 244.3;
- (e) Is not ineligible under 8 C.F.R. § 244.4; and
- (f) (1) Registers for TPS during the initial registration period announced by public notice in the *Federal Register*, or
 - (2) During any subsequent extension of such designation if at the time of the initial registration period:
 - (i) The applicant is a nonimmigrant or has been granted voluntary departure status or any relief from removal;
 - (ii) The applicant has an application for change of status, adjustment of status, asylum, voluntary departure, or any relief from removal which is pending or subject to further review or appeal;
 - (iii) The applicant is a parolee or has a pending request for reparole; or

(iv) The applicant is a spouse or child of an alien currently eligible to be a TPS registrant.

- (g) Has filed an application for late registration with the appropriate Service director within a 60-day period immediately following the expiration or termination of conditions described in paragraph (f)(2) of this section.

The phrase continuously physically present, as defined in 8 C.F.R. § 244.1, means actual physical presence in the United States for the entire period specified in the regulations. An alien shall not be considered to have failed to maintain continuous physical presence in the United States by virtue of brief, casual, and innocent absences as defined within this section.

The phrase continuously resided, as defined in 8 C.F.R. § 244.1, means residing in the United States for the entire period specified in the regulations. An alien shall not be considered to have failed to maintain continuous residence in the United States by reason of a brief, casual and innocent absence as defined within this section or due merely to a brief temporary trip abroad required by emergency or extenuating circumstances outside the control of the alien.

The phrase brief, casual, and innocent absence, as defined in 8 C.F.R. § 244.1, means a departure from the United States that satisfies the following criteria:

- (1) Each such absence was of short duration and reasonably calculated to accomplish the purpose(s) for the absence;
- (2) The absence was not the result of an order of deportation, an order of voluntary departure, or an administrative grant of voluntary departure without the institution of deportation proceedings; and
- (3) The purposes for the absence from the United States or actions while outside of the United States were not contrary to law.

Persons applying for TPS offered to El Salvadorans must demonstrate continuous residence in the United States since February 13, 2001, and continuous physical presence in the United States since March 9, 2001. A subsequent extension of the TPS designation has been granted by the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, with validity until March 9, 2005, upon the applicant's re-registration during the requisite time period. The record reveals that the applicant filed his application with the Immigration and Naturalization Service, now Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS), on December 20, 2001.

The burden of proof is upon the applicant to establish that he or she meets the above requirements. Applicants shall submit all documentation as required in the instructions or requested by CIS. 8 C.F.R. § 244.9(a). The sufficiency of all evidence will be judged according to its relevancy, consistency, credibility, and probative value. To meet his or her burden of proof the applicant must provide supporting documentary evidence of eligibility apart from his or her own statements. 8 C.F.R. § 244.9(b).

The issue to be addressed in this proceeding is whether the applicant has established his continuous physical presence in the United States since March 9, 2001.

In a notice of intent to deny, dated April 18, 2003, the applicant was requested to submit evidence to establish continuous physical presence in the United States during the requisite timeframe. In response, the applicant submitted some documentation for the year 2002. The director found that this documentation was not sufficient, as it did not "span between March and December of 2001." The director denied the application on June 5, 2003.

On appeal, the applicant states:

The present is being submitted as a formal Motion to Reopen/Reconsider the reason [sic] decision of the Service to deny my application for TPS benefits, dated June 05, 2003.

I believe I qualify for the case to be reopened for the following [sic] reasons:

1. I have never abandoned my case for TPS benefits;
2. I have never committed any crimes, either here nor abroad;
3. I am enclosing proof my continuous residence in the United States December 2000 through the present;
4. I am responding on a timely manner to BCIS, submitting this Motion to Reopen with the appropriate fee of \$110.00.

For the reasons above, I feel I deserve to have my case reviewed and given a timely response by the Service. As such, I respectfully request that the Service approve this Motion to Reopen, revoke its decision to deny my petition for TPS benefits and approve my application to renew my EAD.

The applicant provides: a letter dated June 17, 2003, from [REDACTED] certifying that she has known the applicant since December 2000 through the present; a letter dated June 17, 2003 from Maria I. Parada Hernandez certifying that she has known the applicant since December 2000 through the present; and, a copy of the applicant's expired Employment Authorization Card.

The letters presented on appeal, without supporting documentary evidence, are not sufficient for meeting the burden of proof in these proceedings. *See Matter of Treasure Craft of California*, 14 I&N Dec. 190 (Reg. Comm. 1972). The additional documentation presented is not sufficient, credible evidence that demonstrates the applicant's continuous physical presence in the United States since March 9, 2001. He has, therefore, failed to establish that he has met the criteria described in 8 C.F.R. § 244.2(b). Consequently, the director's decision to deny the application for TPS on this ground will be affirmed.

Beyond the decision of the director, the applicant has not established his continuous residence in the United States since February 13, 2001. In addition, the applicant has not provided evidence to establish his identity. Therefore, the application must also be denied for these reasons.

An alien applying for temporary protected status has the burden of proving that he or she meets the requirements enumerated above and is otherwise eligible under the provisions of section 244 of the Act. The applicant has failed to meet this burden.

ORDER: The appeal is dismissed.